handing over of the remaining plots of land essentially required for completion of the project. Also, the Project is being given priority in the allotment of funds, as required.

Non-smoking coaches in long distance trains

1837. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to introduce a series of non-smoking coaches in long distance trains during the current year;

(b) if so, the details of trains in which such non-smoking coaches would be introduced;

(c) whether any experiment in this regard has been made; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (d) On some trains one second class coach has been earmarked for non-smokers on an experimental basis. Boards indicating smoking not allowed have been put up on these coaches and publicity about availability of this facility has been made. Further decision in this regard will be taken after review of the results of the experiment.

1838. [*Transferred to the 8th August 1989*]

Profit earned by Air India

1839. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India made a good profit during 1988-89;

(b) if so, whether the Air India had incurred a great loss during the previous year; and

(c) what efforts are being made to further improve its profitability?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. All India had made a profit of Rs. 43.31 crores in 1988-89; during 1987-88, Air India had incurred a loss of Rs. 43.41 crores.

(c) Air India has introduced the following changes to improve the profitability:—

(i) Two new B-747-300 (Combi) aircraft, acquired in 1988, have been put into service for operation of faster, non-stop, point to point services to Europe, UK and Japan.

(ii) Flights with convenient departure and arrival timings have been introduced;

(iii) Pattern of operations between Gulf and India have been re-structured and point to point, non-stop services are being operated between India-Dubai-Abu Dhabi.

(iv) The inflight services have nudergone several changes and sales promotion and advertising efforts have been intensified.

Opening of Alleppey-Ernakulam Railway Line

1840. SHRI THOMAS KUTHIRAVATTOM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the targetted date of opening of Alleppey-Ernakulam Railway Line;

(b) what is the present status of the project; and

(c) by when the line is expected to be opened for traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) The target date for opening Ernakulam-Alleppey (57 km) new BG Railway Line was 30-6-89. The line was opened for departmental traffic on 28-6-89 and for goods traffic on 28-7-89. It is expected to be opened for passenger traffic soon.